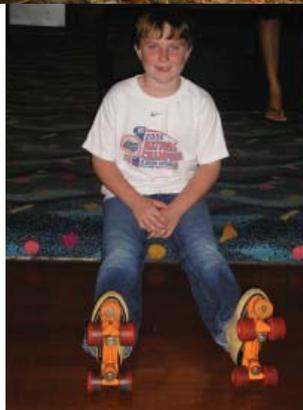
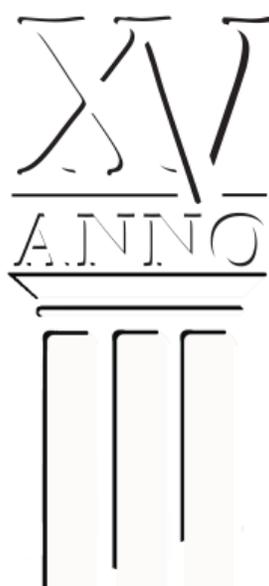




# THE COURIER

THE GENEVA  
SCHOOL  
NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER, 2007



Celebrating 15 Years as a  
Community of Faith and Learning  
1993–2008



See the back page for details about the photographs

# Community Matters

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About a month ago, several of us sat around a table with a few consultants from an out-of-town firm to chat about the nature and work of Geneva. The school had invited them to our campus to advise us on matters of the future, and they wanted to get to know us better, to hear from us face to face, before offering us any advice. Not ten minutes had passed before one of our guests interrupted the seemingly smooth conversation with a surprisingly sheepish admission. “I’m a reasonably educated woman,” she began, “but I have to say that I’m a little embarrassed for not knowing what the word pedagogy means. It’s been used several times in the past few minutes, and I’m not sure I understand it.”

What a delightfully candid and refreshingly vulnerable comment that was! In a matter of a few words, she reminded us all that while words truly matter, others’ understanding of them matters, too. Very often we get used to using certain terms and phrases in ways that make sense only to those on the “inside,” those who know the secret pedagogy handshake, as it were. “If Geneva wants others to continue getting to know what sort of school it is, to grow in their understanding of what sort of community it hopes to become,” she continued, “then it needs to be sure to share its ideas and ideals with others carefully and helpfully enough that they can understand and appreciate them.”

The word community is no different. We use the term often and happily. We describe Geneva as a community of faculty and students, as well as a community of faith and learning. We’ve described this year, in fact, as Geneva’s crystal anniversary, its 15th year of Christian Classical education in community. Last week, we led dozens of students on a three-day retreat to North Florida to build community and enjoy it. But what do we mean when we say community? We use the word often, but does it suffer the same fate as the word pedagogy—the lack of a commonly understood definition? If so, then let’s take the time now to clarify.

The Geneva School seeks to instill in the educational community it cultivates an enduring love of learning, a commitment to serve others, and a dedication to the pursuit of religious truth, moral goodness, and aesthetic beauty, forged from historical models of orthodox Christianity.

**Page 2**

Though unknown to many, this is one of three guiding statements that provide shape to the life of Geneva. Unlike our mission statement (which tells why we exist) and our vision statement (which tells what we hope to become), this statement of values serves as a sort of compass to help ensure that we stay on course to our destination. It says less about how we got where we are, or even where we plan to go, than it does about how we plan to get there—in what manner, by what means.

First, Geneva understands that the cultivation of community takes time. It is more like farming than manufacturing; it requires hard work, patience, and charity. Second, we want to see in teachers, students, and parents alike not only the distinctions of an excellent education, but also an awe, a zeal, and a wonder to learn ever more, and more deeply, about God and His world. Third, Geneva takes seriously our Lord’s own summary of the Law: love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength and love neighbor as oneself. We want to be a giving and serving community, imitating the One who came not to be served but to serve. Fourth, Geneva hopes to see in its community an enduring love of the good, the true, and the beautiful and a reflecting of these virtues in earnest in the various lives of its members. And fifth, the community we pray God cultivates in our midst is one characterized continually by the grace, mercy, and redemption that are only His to give. Geneva wants to be not only a Christian school in name, but also a truly Christlike school in deed.

Words matter, to be sure. That members of a Christian community working toward common ends understand and appreciate those words with both clarity and charity, however, matters more. In this, our 15th academic year, let’s renew our sense of Geneva’s hopes, dreams, and aspirations for a community of faith and learning, and let’s commit to one another to work and pray for its cultivation.

Michael Eatmon  
*Academic Dean*

*(Pedagogy: the art or science of being a teacher, and generally refers to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction. The word comes from the Ancient Greek word paidagōgēō, which literally means “to lead the child.”)*

# Parent Volunteer Update

Volunteering at Geneva is a great way to maximize your investment in your student's education. You receive more for your tuition by volunteering because you get to know some of the wonderful staff, other parents, and the inner workings of the school, not to mention the way your helping hands benefit our community of learning.

Most of our teachers, particularly in the grammar school, welcome parent assistance and will communicate their needs at the upcoming Fall Open House or in Communication Folders. For school-wide needs, Maria Francis, our newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator, wants to help you find the right spot to fit your interests and schedule. It need not



be a year-long commitment; there are many opportunities to participate in one-time projects or events.



Many parents have already completed and returned forms indicating their willingness to volunteer at Geneva. Thank you! Your information is on file, and we will be getting in touch as needs arise. Already parents have pitched in with the New Moms' Coffee and the Entertainment Book fundraiser.

The Parent Volunteer Form can be found on the school website on the Forms page. Do something nice for yourself and for Geneva: volunteer! For more information, contact Maria Francis at [msfrancis@genevaschool.org](mailto:msfrancis@genevaschool.org).

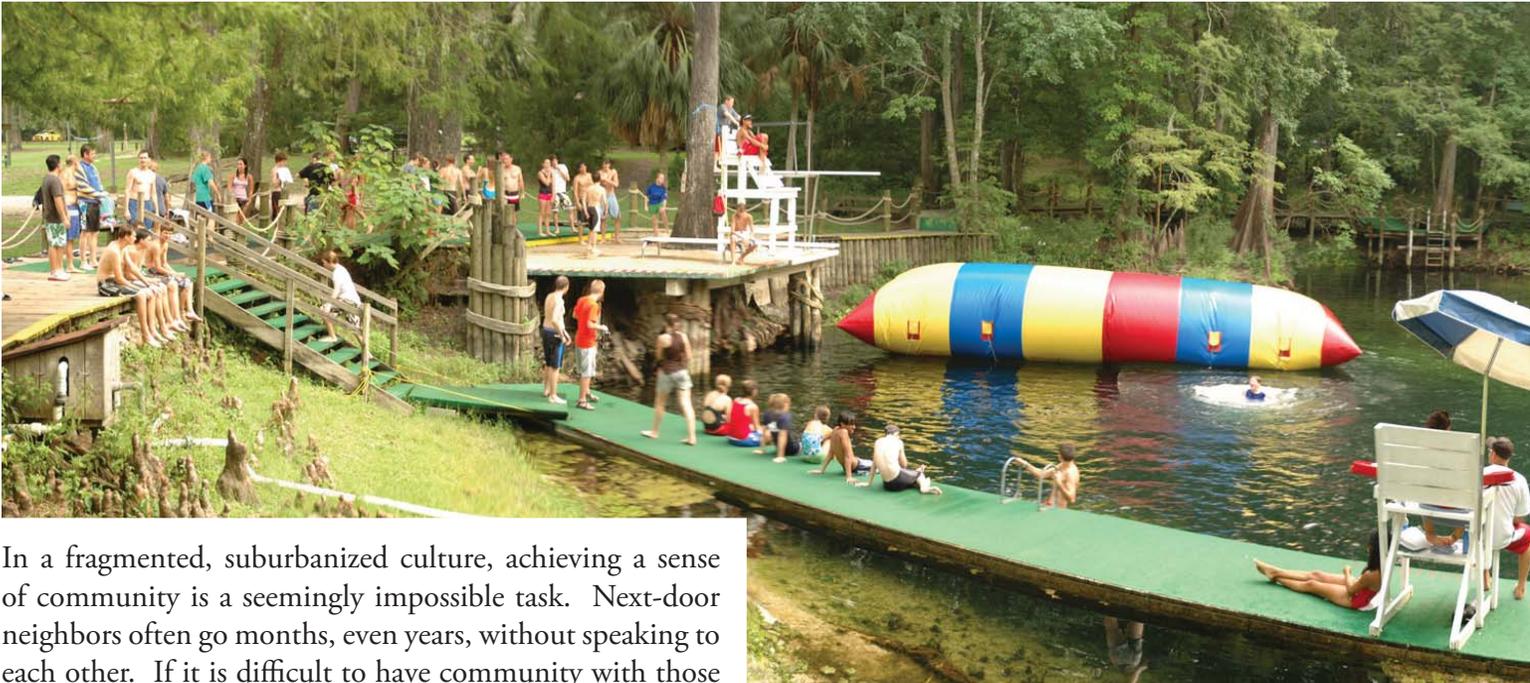
**You will laugh  
You will cry  
You won't believe your eyes  
From the sublime to the ridiculous  
One night only**

## **THE GENEVA SCHOOL VARIETY SHOW**

**Featuring acts by students (Gr. 6–12) and faculty  
Saturday, October 27, at 7:00 PM  
Aloma United Methodist Church  
Tickets on sale October 1  
\$8 in advance/\$10 at the door**

Students interested in auditioning should talk to Mr. or Mrs. Miller or any member of the Rhetoric Choir before September 26. Auditions will take place on September 27.

# RHETORIC RETREAT



In a fragmented, suburbanized culture, achieving a sense of community is a seemingly impossible task. Next-door neighbors often go months, even years, without speaking to each other. If it is difficult to have community with those one literally lives with, a betting man might be tempted to wager a large sum of money against the possibility of forming meaningful community among teenagers who cover both a four-year age span and much of metro Orlando. But the wisdom of the world doesn't always work, for in this case the gambler would evidently not have factored into his assessment the unifying work of the Holy Spirit. Nor would he likely have attended the recent Rhetoric Retreat at Camp Kulaqua, where all but a couple of Geneva's ninth through twelfth graders gathered for 48 hours of fellowship, teaching, and surprisingly decent camp food! The theme of the retreat was "Geneva: A Community of Faith and Learning." Five speakers—Michael Eatmon, Bob Ingram, Kevin Clark, Ravi Jain, and I—addressed that theme from various perspectives.

The retreat provided a number of opportunities for me, as the brand new Dean of Students, not only to engage a number of students directly—whether sitting on the porch of the general store, standing in the cold waters of the spring, or chasing them all over a football field—but also to sit back and observe their interactions in large- and small-group settings. What became apparent to me throughout the course of the retreat was that The Geneva School is among the vanguard of community-creating schools. Of course, in one sense it is misleading to say "community-creating," since humanity always lives in community, either embracing it or rejecting it in varying degrees. But in



# AUGUST 14–16



another sense, if we are going to have true biblical community, prayerful and creative work must ever be done. Relationships always involve work! What is apparent to me is that, at Geneva, work has been done and is being done to form the kind of community that I believe pleases our Lord.

St. Peter, however, reminds us that there is an enemy out there who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. There can be no doubt that the evil one would like to devour the Geneva School and snuff out its beacon. Nothing is too great for the arm of the Lord, though, and so part of our call to be a community of faith and learning is to pray that our Lord would guard us from division and strife, vices that unfortunately hamper the work of many otherwise good schools.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, and may He continue to bless the Geneva community and commend us as salt and light to an increasingly secularized and divided culture.

# With Growth Comes Change and with Change Comes Progress

## Important information about changes in Geneva's admission process



This year The Geneva School is introducing a new approach to admissions. Even though the school year has just started, we have already begun the process of recruiting for the 2008/2009 school year. I know this might sound a little premature, but if we are to meet our goal of having a full school by the spring of next year, we need to begin early. After Express

Re-enrollment closes for current families on February 1, we intend to send out admission decision letters to prospective families. By March we hope to have all classes full and to have a wait pool of qualified candidates who are hopeful that a spot will open up for their child. If you or someone you know is considering making application to Geneva for the 2008/2009 school year, we encourage everyone to do so now.

Dates for admission assessments are already scheduled, and a new standardized assessment for students entering grades 5–12 is being implemented. This test is called the ISEE (Independent School Entrance Examination).

As well as offering tours of the school three days a week, we also have two Prospective Parent Open Houses scheduled (Nov 6 and Feb 25) and two Come & See events for students and parents of rising 5–12 graders (Oct 4 & 25).

I am prayerfully and graciously asking for your help in admissions. I need our school family to invite their friends and family in for a tour so they can learn more about how The Geneva School can have an impact on their children's lives. Your referrals and continued support of our admission efforts are greatly appreciated as we plant seeds that will allow us to realize the gift of a new campus. Look how far we have come! I am amazed and in awe of God. He has blessed us in so many ways and I am eternally grateful for our Geneva families.

Patti Rader  
*Director of Admission*

### Admission Assessments

This year assessments of prospective students will take place on five Saturdays scheduled throughout the year. Parents making application for students entering grades pre-K–4 should schedule an assessment with the Geneva admission department (the assessment usually takes between 1–1½ hours). Parents making application for students entering grades 5–12 should schedule their child to take the ISEE test at [www.iseetest.org](http://www.iseetest.org). Please note: It is necessary to register at least three weeks in advance for one of the test dates listed below.

#### The Geneva School admission test dates for all grades:

- Saturday, November 3, 2007
- Saturday, December 1, 2007
- Saturday, January 19, 2008
- Saturday, March 8, 2008
- Saturday, April 5, 2008

### General Admission Assessment Information

All applicants for grades Pre-K–4 are expected to take an admission assessment with a Geneva School faculty member on one of the scheduled test dates. All local applicants for grades 5–12 are expected to take the Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE). The admission committee may accept results from the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) from applicants outside Orlando and the surrounding area and from other states.

A current Comprehensive Testing Program CTP-4 through ERB may be accepted in lieu of the ISEE as long as the test was taken within six months of the application deadline date.

Applicants who have taken the Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or ACT as a high school student may not need to take the ISEE. Call the Admission Office if you have questions regarding testing.

## What is the ISEE, and how do I register my child to take the test?

The Independent School Entrance Examination (ISEE) is a three-hour admission test for entrance into grades five through twelve. The ISEE has three levels: a Lower Level for students currently in grades four and five who are candidates for admission to grades five and six, a Middle Level for students in grades six and seven who are candidates for admission to grades seven and eight, and an Upper Level for students in grades eight to eleven who are candidates for admission to grades nine through twelve.

The ISEE consists of carefully constructed and standardized verbal and quantitative reasoning tests that measure a student's capability for learning, as well as reading comprehension and mathematics achievement tests that provide specific information about an individual's strengths and weaknesses in those areas. All levels include a timed essay, written in response to an assigned topic. The essay is not scored, but a copy is forwarded to the recipient schools along with the Individual Student Report, which shows scaled scores, percentiles, and stanines.

You should register at least three weeks in advance for one of the test dates listed above at [www.ISEEstest.org](http://www.ISEEstest.org). The Geneva School's test site code is 102100.



## Prospective Parents Open Houses

**Tuesday, November 6 & Monday February 25**

*These are informational meetings designed for parents who are considering Geneva for their children.*

## Come and See Events

Two mornings have been set aside when prospective students and their parents can "come & see" Geneva in action. Classrooms will be open for you to visit and observe our teachers in action, and administrators will also be available to meet with you.

**Thursday, October 4,**

*For students making application for grades 5 - 8.*

**Thursday, October 25**

*For students making application for grades 9 - 12.*

## Contact the Admission Office

**Patti Rader (Director of Admission)**

[pnrader@genevaschool.org](mailto:pnrader@genevaschool.org)

407-332-6363 ext. 204

**Candi Houk (Admission Coordinator)**

[clhouk@genevaschool.org](mailto:clhouk@genevaschool.org)

407-332-6363 ext. 207



# *Dates for Your Calendar...*

September 3:	Labor Day
September 8:	Third- and Tenth-Grade Parents' Knight Out
September 10:	Grammar School Open House (7:00–8:30pm)
September 14:	Progress Reports Sent Home (Grades 3–6) Seventh-Grade Parents' Knight Out
September 15:	Second-Grade Parents' Knight Out
September 17:	Dialectic and Rhetoric Open House (7:00–8:30pm)
September 19:	Fall Senior Dinner
September 21:	Fifth-Grade Parents' Knight Out
September 22:	SAT Strategies Seminar (9:00am–4:00pm) Eighth-Grade Parents' Knight Out
September 25:	New Parent Dinner—6:30pm at Leu Gardens
September 27:	Early Dismissal PLAN test for tenth-grade students in the afternoon Parent/Teacher Conferences (1:00–4:00pm)
September 28:	Parent/Teacher Conferences (8:00am–12:00pm & 1:00–4:00pm)

**If you wish to schedule a conference with your child's teacher(s) on September 27 and/or 28, please contact Isabel O'Driscoll at ext. 206.**

## **Photographs**

**Front Page:** Clockwise from the top—Avery Sponsler and Caroline Dooling during Picnic in the Park; Eighth-graders at lunch; Sarah Brodrecht and Alana Parish in the hall; Shelly and Ellie Shafer & Christina and Robert Gordon during Picnic in the Park; Sixth-grade reading time; Morning arrival; Brooke Godwin enjoying a book; Cole Leifer at the Back-to-School Skate Night; Rhetoric Retreat; Third-grade at work.  
**Page 7:** Heather Shiflett (Pre-K Aide) reading with the class; Students playing at recess.

The Geneva School  
2025 State Road 436  
Winter Park, FL 32792

